19: Kharuzin -- 52 E-4 (no date) 1898 Yakut
116, 178, 836, 58

Discrepancies between the ages of the bridegroom and bride play no role in the selection of a bride; in general, the greatest significance is attached to the economic calculation, the labor capacity of the bride, the dowry expected from her parents, etc. In the selection of a bridegroom the parents of the bride are chiefly concerned with his economic position and industry. Hence it is understandable that in marriage among the Yakuts, in the words of Mr. Pripuzov, confirmed by other investigators, the mutual love of the couple, as well as the question of the virginity of the bride, do not play an important role, the more so since Yakut morality does not usually regard with disapproval the girl who has had children before marriage: they look upon her as a good future wife. Thus the choice of spouses for their children is left to the will and discretion of parents. Up to the present time the Yakuts of the district studied by Mr. Pripuzov observe the principle of marrying off their sons in turn: first the oldest son marries, then the next oldest, etc.; formerly this custom was also observed with relation to the daughters: the younger daughter was not given in marriage before the older one; nowadays this principle in the giving of daughters in marriage is no longer observed.

27: Coxwell--293-295 B-3 (no date) 1925 Yakut-1-3
116, 539, 58

[RCH: The following is the author's own comment on the folk-tale "Black Hawk" in category 539, pp. 281-284.]

"Marriage 'by capture' is not unrepresented in Siberian folk-tales. There are signs of it in Koryak myths. In the Altaian story, 'Aymanys,' a bride is gained by violence. She agrees to marry if her wooer can conquer her in single combat, but he fails and she succumbs only after a long contest with the friend who battles on his behalf. Then she becomes a good wife. In 'Black Hawk' the fighting is done by a hero to aid his brother-in-law; he overcomes the bride's numerous defenders and snatches her from a would-be husband. In the circumstantial account of Bashkir marriage customs, to be found further on, it becomes clear that the swain may have to invite, or rely on, help from the girl's friends, if he finds the task of winning her too great. Thus it would seem, at all events in these tales, that marriage by capture may be something other than an expedition by a solitary warrior setting out and seizing a woman and dragging her to his home. In practice, assistance was requisite.

A not infrequent allusion is to be found to marriage by purchase. The Yakut demon's daugher, Loud Voice, informs the husband whom she covets that he will have to pay her brother eighteen mares as a wedding gift. In the Bashkir tale, 'The Deceiver,' money is paid to a matchmaker and handed by her to the maiden's father. In the Yakut story, 'The Little Old Woman with Five Cows,' the bridegroom makes a rich wedding gift to his bride's only parent, her mother. In the Ostyak, 'The Hunter and the Seven-headed

Satyr,' the elk and reindeer hunter receives the youngest of the [294] governor's daughters as wife, 'without being asked for any payment.' Among the Yukaghirs, we are told, the match-maker settles how many reindeer are to be paid by the bride-groom's father as purchase money, and how many reindeer and sledges the maiden brings as dowry.

In the Kirghiz, 'Three Sons' a glimpse is obtained of the custom by which the marriage is consummated in the house of the bride's parents. In the Ethnography of the Bashkirs it is stated that it still sometimes obtains that the husband only takes his wife to his home after several years. In some of the Yukaghir clans the wedding ceremony is simple; a girl's sweetheart is considered to have married her if he brings his gun and bow and hunting equipment when he visits her tent at night. Among the tundra Yukaghirs, the future son-in-law works on probation for a year or two in his future father-in-law's house. The bride's seclusion is alluded to in the Yakut, 'Little Old Woman,' and in the Chukchi story, 'The Young Shaman and his Bride,' the husband says to his wife, when visitors are expected, 'Only let your hand be seen, only your wrist.'

Among the lowest races, such as the Gilyaks, the Samoyedes, the Chukchis and Lapps, the tales do not mention any marriage festivity or celebration, but with the less primitive, and even with the Yakuts, the wedding is accompanied by feasting and games and a holiday of phenomenal duration. In the Kirghiz story, 'Kara Kos Sulu,' the wedding festivities lasted forty days, and the Kirghiz hero, Kysil-batyr, had a long wedding. In the Yakut, 'Little Old Woman,' the celebrations were not only of immense length,

but attended by numerous ancestral spirits, both from the air and from below ground. The tales imply a state of things in which divorce is to be had by the husband at will, and the khan is depicted as able to please himself freely in the matter of taking wives.

Marriage with a witch may mean union with a woman capable of being eventually converted into a beauty of good character, as in the Great Russian, 'The Sorceress'; or it may mean that the wife is much like other women, except that she practises witchcraft, as in the White Russian, 'The Sorceress.' On the other hand, in Siberian stories the witch is apt to display physical repulsiveness, as in Yellow Ugur story, 'Marriage of a Youth and a Witch'; or to become murderous and strangely unnatural, as when in the Bashkir, 'The Witch [295] or Sorceress,' she swallows first a horse and then a cart, and finally eats her daughter-in-law! But marriage may be still more uncomfortable; thus, Black Hawk's first wife (a demon's daughter) removed, during his sleep, parts of his body and used them to supply the deficiencies of her own body. Though perhaps the fantastically hideous demon's daughter, who became the false bride in the Yakut, 'Little Old Woman,' could scarcely figure in any Russian story, yet the Slav imagination is capable of horrors, for in 'Prince Ivan and Princess Maria,' maidens are married to husbands who sometimes assume the form of twenty- and thirty-headed snakes, and in a Lithuanian tale girls are mated to six or nine-headed dragons."